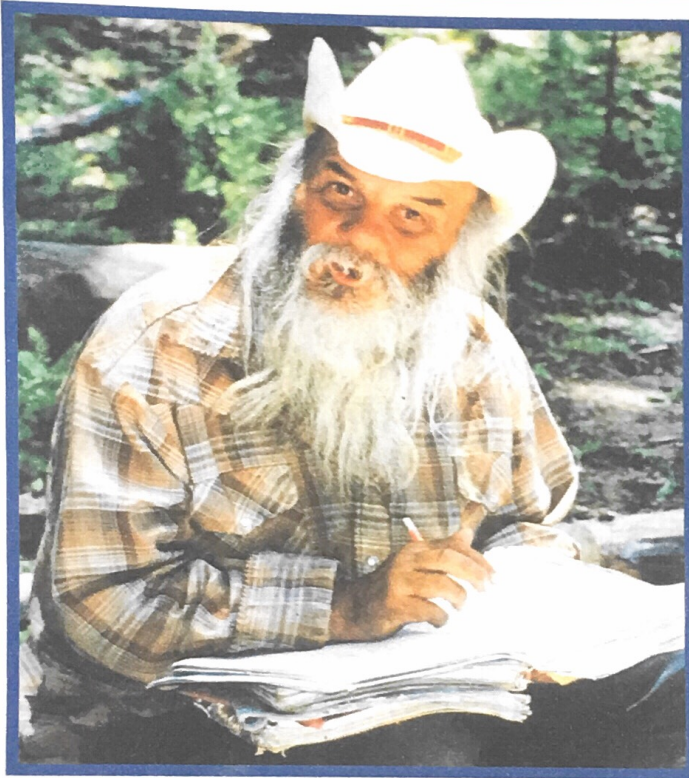




Rainbow Family

Life Stories



*by Jodey Bateman.
Interviews with Rainbow
Family of Living Light
folks conducted between
1977 and 2008.*

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15.C SCOTT - "The Community House
in Tucson"
-interviewed in 1984 at the
California Gathering

6 pages

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Scott Community House in Tucson

[Scott's life story is done from an interview with him at the Arizona Regional Gathering in March, 1984. Community House, where he worked is typical of many small groups associated with Rainbow - groups that form, disappear and form again rapidly.]

I used to have some pretty good times. Even the bad times look good now.

I was born in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1961. My father is a chemical engineer. My mother is a part-time manager of a Revco drug store. I've got one younger brother and one younger sister.

My grandfather was a minister - Presbyterian or Methodist. I never had no religion. I know there is somebody up there, but I don't know who you call him.

My parents got divorced when I was ten. My stepfather is a 24-year veteran machinist. He's a UAW member. He's got a nice Harley-Davidson and a Japanese bullshit bike.

I smoked pot first when I was 14. I dropped my first hit of acid when I was 15. We used to smoke PCP and have sword fights with crowbars. I got my wrist fractured. It was just fun, man.

I graduated high school at 17 with a 92.8 average. I could have went to college, but I wanted to be on my own and college ain't my idea of being on my own. The first summer after I got out of high school, I hung out in Williamsport and then I split to Texas for eight months. I kind of used Williamsport as my home base.

Since I was about 17, I've supported a lot of women in my day. I hitched to Reno, Nevada, with this girl once time. I couldn't find a job at first. I'd go drinking Mad Dog with the migrant Indians along the Truckee River.

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I'd go home and the old lady would complain because I was drunk and I'd give her a couple of joints and she'd shut up.

Her father sent her a bus ticket home. I hitched back and stopped in Toledo. I made five porno flicks there - screwing for \$1,000. I got back to PA. I went to my girlfriend's house. Her dad answered the door. He said, "What do you want?"

I said, "I want to see my girlfriend."

He said, "She ain't your girlfriend no more."

She heard me talking and she went down to see me and I showed her my \$1,000 and she stared at it and said, "How did you get it?"

I said, "You don't want to know."

When I was 19, I was a prospect for a bike club. There was a couple of brothers in it I knew from when we was knee high. I lived with them for five months. We was partying and we ran out of liquor and they handed me a shotgun. They wanted me to rip off a liquor store as my initiation and I said, "Look, I don't go to jail for myself, let alone somebody else."

They respected me for my decision. I hung out with them for a couple of weeks after that and then I got myself a job with CETA and my own place. I kept in touch with them.

Then I worked for Penn-DOT - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. I did the shit jobs that they couldn't pay nobody else \$8 an hour to do. I was drinking and fighting a lot for lack of better interests. I had all that money and nothing to do with it.

I got a job as a machinist in a Venetian blind factory. We got paid on Thursdays. We'd go after work to Sonny's Tavern. First I started getting drunk on Thursdays. Then Thursdays and Fridays. Then Thursdays and Fridays and Saturdays. You had to wade through my room, it was so full of bottles. Then I started going

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to work drunk and they fired me because they didn't want nobody running a machine drunk.

Then I got in a de-tox unit voluntarily. I still drank - not as heavily. Off and on I'd be coming to Texas. After de-tox I went to California to my brother in law in the Air Force. I was drinking still, but I was controlling it. They never had to carry me out of the Airmen's Club. Once I drank 23 screwdrivers and walked out \$40 richer. These two guys bet me \$20 each that I couldn't do it. I haven't drank much since I left California.

I went back to Pennsylvania to get my bike. I was gonna live in Texas for a while. Then my bike blew up on me and I give it away.

I got a limited area of work. I'm a factory worker. In Texas I can get a lot of jobs, but in Arizona they ain't got no factories. So I was heading to Chandler, Arizona where my uncle lives and I got caught up in the Community House trip in Tucson at the beginning of August, 1983 - age 22.

I went to Community House for a shower and something to eat. The next day, Daniel Fourwinds, who started Community House, asked me if I wanted to plug into the house and I said yes. I never intended to be here this long. (March, 1984) and now I've been there longer than anyone else by at least four months. I'm helping people get off the streets. I like helping people. I been taking for so long and now I got a chance to give it back.

I started working there. The first thing I did, I painted the trim on the house. I did a little bit of everything around the house - painting and carpentry and plumbing. I had one job with a Rainbow brother in another house digging out a crawl space eighteen inches high under the kitchen.

We're a non-profit organization, trying to

(4) become self-sufficient in a land of vipers - that's what Tucson is. For the past two months we've been making a living out of collecting cardboard for recycling. Mostly we get jobs from the people we get the cardboard from. We get contributions and what we get on our cardboard route and a lot of dumpster diving. We pay \$100 a month rent for the house and another \$100 for utilities, and another \$300 for vehicles. We have a '59 Apache that we tear the shit out of on cardboard runs. At one time we had 27 people in three houses. Now we're down to one house and nine or ten people.

Tucson is down on transients for sure. They want to have a misdemeanor farm for things like pissing in the street and jaywalking. It's on the ballot in April (1984). All it is is a work farm. They don't want transients, and they're gonna get rid of them one way or another. They're trying to close down the missions.

My mom is my hardest critic, but Daniel Fourwinds is pretty hard on judging me. I heard about Rainbow from him. He said "We're all going to this regional gathering at T or C, New Mexico." (October, 1983).

That scene just blew me away, man. It was beautiful. Community House didn't have a kitchen there per se.

I went to the regional gathering with Deborah. She's a naturopath from Tucson. She was always business like and then when she went to the gathering she was like a little kid. It was a side of her I never seen before. We walked around holding hands, tripping out of our heads. I was dosed for four days straight on acid and mushrooms.

Enlightenment is what it is. People actually do live this way and it works. The only thing that got me was how cold it was at night and then how warm it would get in the day.

Since the New Mexico regional gathering, we've had a lot of ins and outs at Community House. What it is,

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is turnover. We get some people and then they get their trips together and they move out. Community House is nice. We've got a concept and it works. If you work outside of the house, you've got to pay 25% for room and board. It works out it's a lot cheaper than living on your own.

I'll never sell blood or give it. I've got too much scar tissue on my veins from shooting up in high school. I used to shoot up Delavido, Percodan and crank. The last time I shot up was 1981 - three years ago. I don't miss it.

Every day if I'm in Tucson. I work at least four hours in the Food Bank. The Food Bank is part of a national network. They distribute food to the various agencies like Traveler's Aid and the Salvation Army. I work at the Food Bank for credit for the minimum wage and we get salvage food for Community House at five cents a pound.

I like working at the Food Bank because most of the people there are volunteers - really positive energy. Other people, the court sends them there for community service for charges.

There were three lady volunteers there once, the youngest was 64. The old ladies asked me, "How can you tell if the people you're helping at Community House are sincere or just consumers?"

I said, "Well, the only professional street person we have is Skipper. He's hard core, but he scans stuff for us. I'd say 90% of the people who come through Community House really want to get off the street."

We have five volunteers who work with Community House who don't live there. We also have a part-time secretary. We have one lady who brings by bagels and cream cheese. It's beautiful, man. Ever since I've been at Community House, I've been learning something new every day.

⑥ I had a trip once at Community House - it was pretty good acid. I had a personality check with everybody at Community House. Everybody was coming to me with a problem. Usually, if someone has a problem, I just head out the door, but here I was stoned and...

We have a free clinic at Community House, four hours a day on Tuesdays. We have a nurse come who's working on something called practical medicine. About two or three people come each time from Traveler's Aid with something wrong with them. The nurse is really a beautiful person. We sent her a letter about a month ago that we all signed. Our secretary wrote it. It was really well written, but the nurse said what made her know it was really from Community House was the tomato paste stains on it.

I only got to the regional gathering in Arizona the last day - personal preference. I could have came out earlier, but I stayed in Tucson to keep the house in order. As for the work crew here for clean-up, I ain't never seen energy so scattered - polarization. They accuse our Community House kitchen of hoarding food.

I want to be back in Tucson soon. They're making this movie, Then Ben Alley and we can get parts as extras there - bikers - making \$85 a day. If I put on my leathers everybody says I still look like a biker. I used to fight two or three times a month. Now I don't fight no more.

I ain't no country boy. I'm from the city. I can only stay in the mountains for a few days unless I got plenty of LSD and then I can stay anywhere. I've had a hell of a good life - I don't care about all the shit that comes down.

[Community House is gone. Now in 1992, Daniel Fourwinds, the founder, is growing organic coffee in Mexico.]